

Islamic values give us stability, says PM

ALOR STAR, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia enjoyed peace and prosperity and was protected from various disasters because of the practice of Islamic values.

The Prime Minister said that a society which adopted noble values advocated by the Quran would live in peace, prosperity and enjoy political stability and a strong economy.

"Muslims will not go astray as long as they uphold the teachings of the Quran and the *sunnah* (prophetic traditions)," he said when opening the 37th national-level Quran recital test at the Stadium Darul Amanah here tonight.

Twenty-nine participants from all the 14 States, including defending champions Abdul Rahim Ahmad of Kelantan and Umi Kalthom Mohd Zain of Johor, took part in the five-day event.

The theme for this year's recital test is *Al Quran Membina Akhlak Mulia* (Quran Develops Noble Behaviour).

Dressed in blue *baju Melayu* and light purple *samping*, Dr Mahathir was introduced to the participants on his arrival at the stadium about 8.45am. Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, joint organising chairmen Datuk Dr Yusof Nor and Tan Sri Osman Aroff, who is Kedah Menteri Besar.

The Quran recital and *nasheed* for the opening ceremony were performed on the stage, built in the shape of a precious stone to signify the preciousness of the Islamic teachings. It was designed by architect Wan Fatimah

Mohamed Arshad of the Public Works Department here.

The Prime Minister said that because of human weaknesses, no society could practise the teachings of the Quran 100 per cent and enjoy their full benefits.

"But every Muslim society must try. God willing, we can, to an extent, be successful and enjoy the benefits promised (in the Quran)," he added.

Dr Mahathir said to achieve high values in be-

haviour and action, it was necessary for every Muslim to learn and understand the messages of the Quran and *sunnah*.

Dr Mahathir said that based on history, successful Muslims were those with high moral values and it was people with these characteristics who had brought about a great civilisation.

This, he said, was evident at the time of the Prophet Muhammad with the establishment of an Islamic nation which was peaceful and

progressive.

"Islamic civilisation only declined when the teachings of the Quran were ignored or misinterpreted," he said.

He also said that excellence in life in this world and the world hereafter could not be achieved as long as Muslims were not influenced by the teachings of the Quran.

"Moral decline among today's generation is mainly caused by the lack of understanding of the teachings of

the Quran."

He urged all parties, especially parents, teachers and the mass media, to give serious attention to the inheritance of high moral values.

Dr Mahathir said the Quran acted as a guide in all aspects of human life, be it faith, syariah economy or administration.

"The guidance in the Quran is sufficient for us to develop our culture and civilisation in all fields, including introducing ways of tackling problems in life."